for deployment of the CRPF in the Satkosia Gorge forests of Orissa, if so, whether it would improve the situation if such deployment takes place;

(c) the estimated value of trees inside the wildlife sanctuary, as per present market value, whether it would cross Rs. 200 crores; and

(d) what is census figure of major animals inside the sanctuary?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Central Reserve Police Force has been deployed in Berbara Reserve Forest since 1994. According to the report received from the State Government, the quality of forests has improved since then.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The estimated number of major animals inside the sanctuary as reported by the State is as follows:

	Male	Female	Cub	Total
Tiger (Census 2000)	1	2	3	6
Leopard (Census 2002)	4	4	-	8
Elephant (Census 1999)	40	91	31 (Calf & unsexed)	162

Effect of forest fires

955. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the deleterious effects of forests fires, on the regeneration capacity of natural forests, including the regeneration of Sal (Shorea robusta);

(b) whether any study has been undertaken by the Government or State Governments in this regard; if so, the findings thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that forests in our country, predominantly Sal, are being gradually thinned out by the recurring forest fires, collection of leaves, etc.; and

(d) whether Government have constituted any Technology Mission on preventing and combating forest fires?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T. R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Frequent and heavy forest fires cause serious damage to the regenerating seedlings of the forest species including Sal (Shorea robusta). It also adversely affects the soil moisture regime and nutrient balance. This results in change in vegetation profile of the forest type. This has been corroborated by the studies conducted by the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education, Dehradun and other such institutes and universities conducting research on forest ecology.

(c) No, Sir. However, due to biotic pressure, forest fires are quite common in forest areas near villages. This results in degradation of forests which include the Sal forests.

(d) No, Sir. However, a National Master Plan for prevention and control of forest fires has been prepared by the Ministry of Environment and Forest. Based on it funds are being allocated to the State Governments under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Forest Fire Control and Management' for combating forest fires. A national guidelines has also been issued to the State Governments for prevention and control of forest fires.

Pollution by air-conditioning equipments

†956. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that environment in cities and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.